

Mistakes Grapplers Make



Knee on Belly

Rob Gramer

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Published by:

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Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410
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The 12 Major Mistakes that Royally Screw Up Your Knee on Belly Game!

In the interest of full disclosure, I'm not really a knee on belly guy. It's not because I'm not good at it. And it's not because I don't like it. It's because I'm a back taking guy. And going to knee on belly isn't really the best way to take the back.

With that said, it doesn't really matter what kind of bjj I use. It only matters what fits into your game. And if you are a knee on belly guy, then what I'm about to share with you are the secrets to tapping a guy with knee pressure alone.

By the way, my name is Rob Gramer. I'm a bjj brown belt and I absolutely love the grappling game. I'm also a mechanical engineer.

The reason I think it's important to mention I'm an engineer is because my mind is wired to break down problems. I can't count the number of times I've spent awake at night analyzing why a certain submission didn't work...or...why I got swept in practice earlier that evening.

And my engineering training has given me a certain step-by-step approach to breaking down problems...analyzing them...and finding the best possible way to fix them.

This report represents years of BJJ knowledge applied to knee on belly. In it you'll learn:

- The #1 secret to knee on belly that you must remember (and why this will take care of 99% of the mistakes you make)
- How to sweep proof your knee on belly
- Why knee on belly isn't properly named and where your knee should be for maximum pain
- How to secure knee on belly without getting pulled back into guard
- The "instep mistake" that is the #1 reason for escaping knee on belly
- How to escape knee on belly using the "coffee table secret"
- Why you shouldn't roll away in knee on belly (and how to defend the position AND set up a sweet reversal)
- How to defend the mount from knee on belly

I hope you'll enjoy what I share here. I hope even more that you apply what is in this report to become a knee on belly monster.

I look forward to hearing about your success. If you have any questions about what is in this report, please email me at rob@backchoke.com.

Thanks,
Rob Gramer

P.S. Visit www.backchoke.com for more cool bjj related stuff.

Before we get to the meat of this report, a quick thanks.

While every single person who I've ever finished a triangle on (and those who I've just tried to slap one on to, too) deserve thanks here, that would be impossible. But I would like to thank a few key individuals.

Joe Mullings – for having the ability to break down bjj techniques in such minute detail that it blows my mind...and...for running a fantastic academy, the Armory (www.thearmory.tv). I've been a student there since 2003 and it gets better every single year. The equipment is clean and state of the art. The students are respectful. And the instructors are world class.

Raphael Chavez – for making me wonder every single day how someone can be so damn good at bjj. And for giving me my brown belt.

Eduardo Guedes - for reminding me daily the benefits of hard work, dedication and heart. And for giving me my brown belt.

Kurt Pellegringo – for telling me I'd never get my purple belt unless I learned to sweep people, and then being there when I got my purple belt.

Hermes Franca – for giving me my purple belt.

Ricardo Texiera – for being the first black belt I ever rolled with and opening me up to the depths of this sport. And for giving me my blue belt.

Marcel Ferreira – for showing me how bjj can turn you into an absolute badass even if you have a broken neck.

Bill DiFury – for introducing me to the world of martial arts.

Logan Day – for helping me with editing and posing for the pictures in this report.

Edson "Junior" Barboza – for reminding me that I'm no good at Muay Thai and that I should stick to grappling.

And an early thank you to the recently added black belts instructors at the Armory who I haven't had the pleasure to get to know too well, yet I'm sure will be kicking my ass for years to come. Rodrigo Cavaca, Thiago Abreau, Marcus "Buchechea" Almeida and Luiz Cane.

Top Knee on Belly Mistakes

The whole concept of knee on belly is CONTROL with PRESSURE on him from your knee DRIVING INTO HIS CHEST. And then capitalizing on whatever mistakes he makes while trying to escape the pressure (in plain English...catching his ass in a submission and then making fun of him. YES!)

Now I want you to really think about that.

Your goal is to simply make it so excruciatingly uncomfortable that your opponent does something stupid trying to escape. You're not trying to submit. You don't try to advance your position. You simply need to drive your knee into his chest until he *gives you an opportunity you can capitalize on.*

- Maybe he pushes your knee which leaves him vulnerable to armbars
- Maybe he wiggles to his side giving you a gi choke
- Maybe he hip bumps violently trying to buck you off and gives you the mount

Whatever. The point is his mistake drives your finish. You simply need to be patient and wait for an opening.

With that in mind, these are the mistakes that rob you of control and maximum pressure when using knee on belly.

Top Knee on Belly Mistake #1: No Grips

The biggest secret to keeping control on top is NOT simply massive pressure with your knee. It is way too easy for him to focus on the knee and simply rotate around or push away from it. No, instead you need a way to STABILIZE his body when he does try and escape from knee on belly, he moves straight into a set-up for a better position...or better yet...a submission.

And you do THAT with grips.



Don't do this. Make Grips.

I've written a special report separately that deals exclusively with grips (it's free, just go here to download it --→ www.backchoke.com/free-stuff-from-rob) but here's the key – and it's really simple – attacking with the proper grip is an insurance policy. If he starts to rotate out, it gives you a base to hold and switch position and not lose.

So the first mistake is not making the right grip (or just not making any grips whatsoever).

Top Knee on Belly Mistake #2: Support Leg

Have you ever seen a motorcycle parked next to a car?

When you park a car you just turn it off and go. A motorcycle is different. You have to put down a kick stand or else it will fall over. That's because a car with four wheels is inherently stable...a motorcycle with just two wheels needs a third "leg" so it doesn't fall over when it's standing still.

Well, knee on belly is just like a motorcycle. You only have TWO points of contact with the ground (his belly and your foot on the ground). It is inherently unstable.

This instability means it is fairly easy to escape out of, or – if you make this mistake I'm about to reveal – get swept on your butt. And that mistake is keeping your supporting leg too close to his head.



Narrow Stance Bad

When your foot is too close:

1. He can grab it, and sweep me, or...
2. When he starts to push me or if he's a really strong guy and shrimps away I'm gonna lose my balance if it's too close.

Instead, keep your foot out wide for MAXIMUM STABILITY like in the next picture.



Wide Stance Good

So the mistake grapplers make is that they will hop up to knee on belly and they'll leave their supporting foot real, real close. But this kills your balance. Don't do that. Put it out perpendicular from his chest. Not too far forward, and not too far back.

Top Knee on Belly Mistake #3: Shin on Belly

Remember at the beginning of this section when I said the whole point of knee on belly is to put so much pressure on the guy that he is FORCED to

move...and...because of this unbearable pain, MAKES A BIG FAT HUGE MISTAKE AND GIVES YOU A SUBMISSION!

You do want to submit the guy, right? Good. Then listen up...

There is a big long confusing mathematical equation for pressure. But you don't need to know all of the details. All you need to know is that the SMALLER you can make the contact point of where you press on the guy, the MORE pressure he feels.

For example, if I pushed against you with my palm you'd feel it. However, if I pushed against you with a small NEEDLE with the *SAME FORCE* that needle would drive straight through your skin and if you were anything like me, you'd cry like a little girl.

That's the power of pressure.

And when you put your entire shin across his body, you are actually *INCREASING* the contact area, *DECREASING* the pressure he feels. That's not a good thing.

With that in mind, the big mistake here is putting your entire shin on the belly.



Shin on belly doesn't hurt...I'm doing it wrong

Now, knee on belly is actually a misnomer. You don't actually want to have your knee on his belly. You want your knee driving into his solar plexus (that big bundle of nerves in the middle of his chest which controls – among other things – breathing. If he can't breathe, he can't fight. And if he can't fight, you win. And winning is a good thing.)

So make sure you position you knee so it's driving square into his chest, not simply lazily across his belly.

Top Knee on Belly Mistake #4: Pressure Foot off Ground

Lots of new grapplers get really overzealous with this pressure thing...trying to drive their knee in like a jackhammer and make this little mistake. The problem that occurs when this happens is that your foot sometimes comes off the ground...giving him a lever to grab and to escape, or sweep you or whatever.



Foot off Ground Bad

You really just want to drive your foot in so that your instep hugs his hip. This completely takes away his hip escapes because you have a little "feeler" (your instep) that knows exactly what his hips are doing at all times.

Remember, you want pressure on the knee. But you don't want so much pressure where your foot comes off the ground and you are driving all your weight into his chest to cause you to lose stability.

That's the key word here, stability. You never want to trade more pressure for less stability. So make sure you sit back when you're driving your knee in. Almost drive your hips in. In fact, that leads us to our next mistake.

Top Knee on Belly Mistake #5: Posture Effects

And that is how to drive down as much weight as humanely possible...crushing him with the force of ten thousand elephants...while still maintaining total and absolute control from the top. What's the secret?

Posture!

Now the whole concept here is that a lot of these things that I just showed you, the foot up, or the too much weight on the foot, or the shin across, all that is an indication of bad posture.

You'll notice:

- How it is easy to push you backwards when your support leg is in close
- Why you get pulled over and swept to the other side when you make the shin on belly mistake.
- When your foot is off the ground you are leaning forward and it is easy to pull you off balance.

All these things are RESULTS of having bad posture.

So when you're on knee on belly and you STOP doing these different things, these different mistakes, you'll notice it's much easier to keep the position.

Top Knee on Belly Mistake #6: The Set-Up

The biggest mistake occurs before you even get to knee on belly. The set-up.

It is during the transitions to knee on belly that determine how many problems you are going to have when you get there (or if you get pulled back into guard). Pay close attention here.

BJJ is a game of pressure. Maximizing it when you are on top. And minimizing it when you are on the bottom. This importance of this rule is magnified during the times you move from one position to another. Take a look at the following picture.



Hands on the ground = DUMB

Using the floor to get into knee on belly is dumb!

Here's what I mean. When you have top control you have this great thing called GRAVITY helping you hold him down. When you push off the floor you DESTROY GRAVITY (well, not really, but you are working *against* gravity instead of with it).

So when I fight against gravity I take weight off my opponent. And as soon as I do that he feels it, and pulls guard – or advances his position some other way. (Take a closer look and you'll notice when I take my weight off he can just spin his hips right underneath me and pull guard again.)

You absolutely **MUST** lock-down his hip movement during the transition from side control to knee on belly or he will pull guard every single time! You must set up your grips before the transition.

Look at the following picture to see where my grips are.



Grips for Getting to Knee on Belly

Do you see where I have my grips? One is on the shoulder and the other is on his hips right on his bone. This really pins him to the ground while I jump up to knee on belly. No moving out his hips...no pulling guard.

That's it for top knee on belly. Now, let's take a look at what's going on from the bottom.

Bottom Knee On Belly Mistakes

True story. One time a high level black belt got on top of me with knee on belly and made me tap just from the pressure to my chest. Ok, that's not really true.

It's happened much more than once.

But the times I didn't tap...I almost always made one of the following mistakes that forced me to tap (or at least forced me to fight like a wild banshee to escape the bad position I let myself get caught in).

Then I was really tired, breathing heavy, seeing stars and tapped to something else.

You see, Knee on Belly is a transitional position. Grapplers don't usually hang out there all day. They use the pressure to advance their position or to make you do something so they can catch you in a submission (tricky bastards!).

Here are the mistakes they'll try and get you to make.

Bottom Knee on Belly Mistake #1: Flat Back

So what do I mean by flat back. The easiest way to explain it is by having you imagine a table.

A table is flat, right? What happens if you put a ball on top of the table? It just sits there right? But, what if you cut two of the legs of the table in half? Now you have a slanted table right? And the ball will roll off right?

What the hell do balls and tables have to do with knee on belly? Everything!

When you lie flat on your back you are essentially a flat table. Now, imagine your opponents' knee is the ball. If you lie flat on your back he will have no trouble whatsoever balancing directly on top of you.

Now this super sucks for you because, KNEE ON BELLY HURTS! So what do you want to do? You want to give him every opportunity to "roll" off of you.

That's why you need to stay off your back...to get on your side a little... and make it more difficult for him to hold knee on belly. So whenever anyone goes to jump on knee on belly, the first thing you want to do is scoot your

hips out a little and get on your side. Turn into your opponent if you can. It's that easy.

There's a right way to do that, and I'll tell you exactly how at the end of the Mistake #2 explanation.

Bottom Knee on Belly Mistake #2: Push-Up

Ok, so you know being on your back is a bad thing now. So what do you do?

You figure you better hip escape away and get on your side right? And you are absolutely right! So you put your hands on his knee and his hip...you start to push away...and you're getting really happy because you're going to escape, and...

HE CATCHES YOU IN AN ARMBAR!

Well, that didn't work out the way we planned did it? What happened?

The second mistake is pushing away with the arms. When the dude is on top of you there is tons of pressure on you. It hurts. So you figure you've got to push him off of you.

Well the problem with that is what he really wants is **FOR YOU TO PUSH HIM AWAY WITH YOUR ARMS**. Because the second you do that, you give him not one, but two setups for the armbar.



STABILIZE with your arms...DON'T PUSH!

Instead of pushing him away, you should **STABILIZE** the position with your arm. Hold your elbows in tight to your ribs...put your hands out at a 90 degree angle and push off the ground with your feet to **MOVE YOUR HIPS** away.

That will keep your arms in tight, NOT vulnerable to those pesky little armbars. Ok, those are the obvious ones...let's look at some of the less common (but still deadly – ok not deadly...but still dumb) mistakes.

Bottom Knee on Belly Mistake #3: Leg Wrapping

This is something I see a lot of the flexible guys doing. Especially if they are super weak and can't hip escape. They think, "well, I can't push the guy so what am I gonna try and do"? And then they think, "oh well maybe if I can wrap my legs around him and push him back, somehow I'll be able to get out of this knee on belly". So what they'll do is they'll come up here...



The "All Hope is Lost" Technique

...and they'll try and pull their leg through or actually throw it over.

Now, this may work if you've spent the last decade practicing yoga or have BJ Penn like flexibility, but if not you run into a major problem. And that is you can't get a grip on the guy. Even if you do magically happen to throw your leg over, the other guy is already past your hips. And if he's past your hips – AND ON TOP OF YOU – he's got the upper hand.

Using your arms, legs, forehead...whatever...to get a guy off of you is ALWAYS A LOSING BATTLE. You gotta get your HIPS OUT FROM UNDERNEATH HIM.

And that requires using your legs to push your hips away, not trying to wrap him up. PUSH YOUR HIPS AWAY! Do not try to move him away with your arms or your legs...it is a losing battle. Use your legs to move you out from under him.

Heed my advice or you may just make this next mistake.

Bottom Knee on Belly Mistake #4: Rolling Away

Lemme ask you a quick question, is it easier to defend something that you can see...or something that you can't see?

Most people with eyes are visual (hahaha...I made a funny) and prefer to see their opponent's attacks.

Now, how the hell can you do that if the guy is on your back? You can't (unless of course you are like my mom who has eyes in the back of her head and catches every single bad thing I do).

So, in a brief act of desperation when knee on belly is really starting to hurt...grapplers make the biggest mistake of all and try and RUN AWAY and give up their back. This is bad, bad, bad.



Desperation is bad for BJJ

You give up all your tools to get to a better position if you roll away. Your hands can't make grips. You can't stabilize the position and slowly advance. You can't see him. You are absolutely multiplying the suckiness of your position.

So how do you fix this? At the risk of sounding repetitive...you hip escape away by planting your feet firmly on the ground and push with your legs!

Ok, so we've done a lot of good work here. We've figured out how to get out of knee on belly. But there's something that those really, really good grapplers will do that will neutralize all of your hard work. And that's what we're going to talk about next...

Bottom Knee on Belly Mistake #5: No Mount Defense

What's worse than getting two points scored on you? Take a moment to think about it (I'll wait).

Still waiting.

So what's the answer? Four points.

That's right...most guys won't dilly dally in knee on belly. If you watch high level grapplers they use knee on belly as a TRANSITIONARY POSITION. That means they hang out there for a minute to SET UP A SUBMISSION...or...TO TRANSITION TO A SUPERIOR POSITION.

And that means securing the mount on your unlucky ass.

Mount = Four points. That's no good for you.

But, knee on belly hurts so much that some guys will gladly let themselves be mounted instead of dealing with the pain. No no no no no.

So, whatever you do (and especially when you are hip escaping away...HINT HINT) make sure you are blocking his knee like this...



Do this to Block Mount

If you don't he will slip into mount, score four points and be in an even better position.

Let's take a quick detour here. If you've been reading between the lines here, you will see how one mistake leads to another mistake leads to a bigger mistake which leads to your ass getting owned.

For example, a lot of times when you start pushing the guy away (mistake number 1), the top guy doesn't take the armbar...he lets the guy push and push and push until the guys arms are open like a high school girls legs on prom night and...he slides right into mount.

And you've just been suckered.

Watch out how your mistakes stack on top of each other. Prevent this stacking of mistakes and you'll be a bjj bad ass in no time flat.

Ok, last mistake for knee on belly is...

Bottom Knee on Belly Mistake #6: Giving the Opportunity for Knee on Belly

And the final mistake here is that before he even gets to knee on belly.

So he's got you pinned in side mount (and that's another can of worms). This is not good, but he's already got a certain amount of points AND like a million submissions he can pull off.

If he moves to mount – which is in my opinion a more superior position – he's got more control over me (not more submissions, but more control).

But before going to mount, tons of guys do knee on belly first. So you must learn how to defend the transition from side mount to knee on belly...AND...escape your hips out to try and pull guard (I've been saying that you should escape your hips out A LOT. Have you grasped the importance of that yet?)

So the big, big, big mistake here is

- 1) Not keeping your knee up high against his hips to defend the knee on belly...

...and...

- 2) Not keeping your knee up high against his hips to defend the knee on belly WHILE YOU ESCAPE YOUR HIPS

Yeah, that's a lot of work I know. But if it was easy, we'd all be Marcelo Garcia or Roger Gracie. The devil is in the details and a big detail is escaping your hips to regain guard (or get to your knees) while DEFENDING his advances.

Don't Leave Yet!

Did you like this report? Do you want to find out what other types of mistakes may be screwing up your bjj game (like what's going wrong with your gi chokes? Armbars? And why you keep getting your guard passed?)

If so, I urge you to check out www.backchoke.com/bjj-mistakes/

It shows you how to get your hands on an encyclopedia of bjj mistakes in all of the major positions and most common submissions. It's the results of over a decade of hard work and studying this awesome grappling art we call Brazilian jiu jitsu.

Here's the link again www.backchoke.com/bjj-mistakes/. Go check it out now.